

Weed elected mayor

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SANTA CRUZ — In a 4-3 decision Tuesday, the City Council's progressive majority stuck together and chose Jane Weed as the mayor for 1987.

Weed, 31, is the councilwoman whose 1983 election was voided Friday by a decision of the state appellate court in San Francisco. Weed said her team of lawyers will ask justices to rehear the case on the basis factual errors were made. If the request for a rehearing is denied, Weed plans to appeal the decision to the state Supreme Court.

Majority members passed over Councilman Arnold Levine for the job of mayor for the second year in a row. Supporting Levine were Joe Ghio, Katy Sears-Williams and Levine, who was released from the hospital in time to attend Tuesday night's meeting. He had been hospitalized since Saturday with an intestinal problem.

John Laird, a former mayor who is a member of the progressive voting bloc, was elected vice mayor on a 4-3 vote. Minority members supported Sears-Williams for vice-mayor.

Weed replaces outgoing socialist mayor Michael Rotkin, who had also served as mayor in 1981.

Ghio nominated Levine. He said Levine should be mayor because the court had nullified Weed's victory and because Levine was the top vote-getter on the council.

Weed's victory had been challenged in a lawsuit filed by supporters of moderate-conservative candidates, including Ghio, Levine and Sears-Williams.

Ghio nominated Sears-Williams as vice-mayor on the basis that she was the second top-vote getter.

Weed's council term will expire in 1988, unless the appellate decision is upheld by the Supreme Court before the end of her term.

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Court decision or no, Jane Weed is named mayor.

New mayor

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Appellate justices ruled that enough illegal votes were cast at UCSC precincts to nullify Weed's election in favor of her challenger, former city Public Works Director Bill Fieberling, a moderate-conservative.

Rotkin said Tuesday he has asked the city attorney for a report on the status of medical retirement payments paid to Fieberling. Fieberling retired in 1982, reportedly on the basis of a tentative diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. But Fieberling has said he does not believe he has the debilitating brain disease.

Rotkin said in an interview Saturday that he questions whether Fieberling, 59, "is fit to serve on the council."

Ghio said it was "inappropriate" to select Weed for mayor.

"We are faced with a decision from the second highest court that has rendered the nominee (Weed) as invalidly elected," he said. "It seems inappropriate that we should elect such an individual to hold the highest office in the city."

Ghio noted council majority members have not supported his proposals that the mayor be elected by the voters, not by the council. He had supported a proposal to put the mayoral selection on the ballot on Nov. 4, but majority members did not support the ballot measure.

"Majority members wouldn't allow you to vote (on the mayor's selection)," Ghio told the audience of 200 persons who attended the meeting in the council chamber to select the mayor.

Ghio also noted Laird would become mayor, if Weed's efforts fail to

'I want the quality of life for all citizens to mean something.'

— Jane Weed

overturn the decision.

In her acceptance speech, she said: "I promise I won't kick ass, but here comes the Weed administration."

She referred to a comment made a few years ago by former socialist mayor Bruce Van Allen that Weed is "someone who kicks ass."

Weed promised to continue the existing direction of city policies.

She emphasized the importance of maintaining water quality, implementing a curbside recycling program to save space at the dump, "affordable housing," particularly for Beach Flats residents, child care and other social-service programs, and improvements to parks, including Lighthouse Field, where almost no improvements have taken place since it became parkland about 10 years ago.

Weed said she did not want to "just fix roads" and maintain other services, but "I want the quality of life for all citizens to mean something."

"We can celebrate our little paradise here and we can also appreciate it for its diversity."

Speaking on the issue of the homeless, she said the "true solutions" would be found at the state and national level.

Locally, she said, "Certainly the homeless are not the enemy of the



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Santa Cruz Mayor Jane Weed is congratulated by her son, Luke.

(downtown) merchants, and the police are not the enemy of the homeless.

"Let's try walking in each other's shoes for a few miles in a walk to make this city as great as it can be."

Rotkin said factual errors in the

unanimous court decision related to the counting of votes and references to city voting "districts." The city has "precincts," not districts.

Rotkin said the decision reflected "anti-student" sentiments.

Justices overturned a decision by

former Superior Court Judge Harry Brauer. Brauer had ruled that illegal votes were cast, but not enough to overturn the election results.

Weed is married to a San Jose firefighter Ron Pomerantz. She is the mother of two young children,

Luke and Daniel.

"Clearly Ron is making the greatest sacrifice here," she said, referring to his babysitting duties.

"I'm not choosing between family and City Council, but I will be the mother-mayor," added Weed.